



S T A T E O F C A L I F O R N I A

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Department of Managed Health Care to hold public meeting to examine Blue Cross of California merger agreements

(Sacramento) – The California Department of Managed Health Care (DMHC) has announced that it will hold a public meeting in Los Angeles on July 19 to explore financial and health delivery issues that have been raised about Blue Cross of California since the 2004 Anthem-WellPoint merger.

“As we approach the end of the three-year merger agreement period, it is essential that the public have an opportunity to gain insight into Blue Cross’ compliance with the legal commitments made to the people of California as a result of this multi-billion dollar merger,” said Cindy Ehnes, Director of the DMHC. “We must have assurances that Blue Cross’ number one goal is to provide quality health care, not simply increase its profitability.”

Topics that may be explored during the public meeting include the recent payment of a \$950 million dividend to Blue Cross’ out-of-state parent company, timely payment of doctor and hospital claims, affordable health insurance products, participation in Medi-Cal and Healthy Families programs, and hospital or medical group contract terminations. The public meeting notice and agenda are posted on the DMHC Website at www.hmoHELP.ca.gov.

The California Department of Managed Health Care is the only stand-alone watchdog agency in the nation, touching the lives of nearly 21 million enrollees. The DMHC has assisted more than 800,000 Californians through its 24-hour Help Center to resolve HMO problems, while educating consumers on health care rights and responsibilities, and working closely with health plans to ensure a solvent and stable managed health care system.

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